The Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A centralized computer system for managing shipping of a plurality of parcels by a plurality of users using a plurality of carriers, said centralized computer system comprising:

a plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices, wherein the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices are adapted to communicate cooperatively, wherein each server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices is programmed to perform at least one particular shipping management function of a plurality of shipping management functions, wherein each particular shipping management function contributes to managing shipping of the plurality of parcels;

at least a first server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices that is adapted for concurrent remote access by the plurality of users via a communications network, wherein the first server computer device is adapted for communicating an access of the first server computer device by one or more users of the plurality of users to at least one functionally aligned server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices;

at least a second server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices that is programmed to perform a first particular shipping management function, wherein said first particular shipping management function comprises rating each respective request by each respective user of the plurality of users to ship a respective parcel, wherein rating for a respective parcel is performed by the second server computer device according to a respective shipping input from a respective user via a respective client computer device, and wherein rating for the respective parcel is performed

by the second server computer device for each delivery service offered by each carrier of a plurality of carriers that would ship the respective parcel; and

at least a third server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices that is programmed to perform a second particular shipping management function, wherein said second particular shipping management function comprises providing tracking information to a respective user regarding a respective shipping status corresponding to a respective parcel that was shipped by the respective user using a respective carrier, wherein the second server computer device does not provide tracking information regarding the respective shipping status corresponding to the respective parcel, and wherein the third server computer device does not perform rating for the respective parcel.

2.   (Previously Presented) The centralized computer system of Claim 1, wherein at least the second server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices is further programmed to generate a respective simultaneous cross-comparison display of respective shipping rates for each delivery service offered by each carrier of the plurality of carriers that would ship the respective parcel, wherein said simultaneous cross-comparison display is generated for display to a respective display device associated with a respective client computer used by a respective user to access the centralized computer system.

3.   (Previously Presented) The centralized computer system of Claim 1, wherein at least a fourth server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices is programmed to perform a third particular shipping management function, wherein said third particular shipping management function comprises accessing data regarding at least one aspect of facilitating shipping management of the respective parcel, wherein said data is accessed from at least one database, wherein the fourth server computer device does not provide tracking information regarding the respective shipping status

corresponding to the respective parcel, and wherein the fourth server computer device does not perform rating for the respective parcel.

4.   (Previously Presented) The centralized computer system of Claim 1, wherein each said respective shipping input comprises: a first respective item of information characterizing the respective parcel to be shipped by the respective user, a first respective location from which the respective parcel is to be shipped by the respective user, and a second respective location to which the respective parcel is to be shipped by the respective user.

Claim 5.   (Cancelled).

6.   (Previously Presented) A centralized computer system for managing shipping of a plurality of parcels by a plurality of users using a plurality of carriers, wherein each user accesses the centralized computer system over a communications network using a respective client computer device, and wherein each respective user client computer device is adapted for communications with the centralized computer system via the communications network, said centralized computer system comprising:

a plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices, wherein the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices are adapted to communicate cooperatively, wherein each server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices is programmed to perform at least one particular shipping management function of a plurality of shipping management functions, wherein each particular shipping management function contributes to managing shipping of the plurality of parcels;

at least a first server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices that is programmed to communicate with each of the plurality of users over multiple telecommunications connections over the communications network at one time, wherein the first server computer device is adapted for communicating an access of the first server computer device by one

or more users of the plurality of users to at least one other functionally aligned server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices; and

at least a second server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices that is programmed to receive a respective access by one or more respective users of the plurality of users via the first server computer device wherein at least one respective access comprises a respective input by a respective user of a respective unique tracking number , wherein the second server computer is further programmed to respond to the respective input of the respective unique tracking number by determining a carrier associated with the respective unique tracking number, wherein the second server computer is further programmed to further respond to the respective input of the respective unique tracking number by obtaining carrier tracking information corresponding to the unique tracking number from a respective carrier computer system of a plurality of carrier computer systems accessible over the communications network, wherein the respective carrier computer system is associated with the unique tracking number, and wherein the second server computer is further programmed to further respond to the respective input of the respective unique tracking number by displaying the tracking information to the respective user.

7.   (Previously Presented) A centralized computer system for managing shipping of a plurality of parcels by a plurality of users using a plurality of carriers, wherein each user accesses the computer system over a communications network using a respective client computer device, and wherein each respective user client computer device is adapted for communication with the centralized computer system via the communications network, said centralized computer system comprising:

a plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices, wherein the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices are adapted to communicate cooperatively;

at least a first server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices that is programmed to communicate with each of the plurality of users via the communications network at one time, wherein the first server computer device is adapted for communicating an access of the first server computer device by one or more users of the plurality of users to at least one other functionally aligned server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices;

at least a second server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices that is programmed to receive a respective access by one or more respective users of the plurality of users via the first server computer device wherein at least one respective access comprises a respective input by a respective user of a respective request for shipping information regarding a proposed shipment of a respective parcel, wherein the second server computer is further programmed to respond to the respective input of the respective request by obtaining respective data from at least one system database corresponding to the proposed shipment of the respective parcel;

at least a third server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices that is programmed to use the respective data to calculate a first respective shipping rate for a first carrier to ship the respective parcel via a first delivery service, to calculate a second respective shipping rate for a second carrier to ship the respective parcel via a second delivery service, and to calculate a third respective shipping rate for the first carrier to ship the respective parcel via a third delivery service; and

at least one server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices that is programmed to display the first respective shipping rate, the second respective shipping rate, and the third respective shipping rate to a display device in communication with a respective client computer device used by the respective user to input the respective request.

Claim 8.   (Cancelled).

9.   (Previously Presented) A method of configuring a plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices for managing shipping of a plurality of respective parcels by a plurality of respective users using any carrier of a plurality of carriers, wherein each server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices is adapted for communication with at least one other functionally aligned server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices, wherein at least a first server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices is adapted for concurrent remote access by the plurality of respective users via a communications network, said method comprising:

programming at least a second server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices to concurrently receive via the first server computer device a respective shipping input from each respective user of a first subset of the plurality of respective users via a respective client computer device accessed by each respective user of the first subset of the plurality of respective users, wherein each said respective shipping input comprises: a first respective item of information characterizing a respective parcel to be shipped by the respective user, a first respective location from which the respective parcel is to be shipped by the respective user, and a second respective location to which the respective parcel is to be shipped by the respective user;

programming at least one server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices to calculate a first respective shipping rate for a first carrier to ship the respective parcel via a first delivery service, to calculate a second respective shipping rate for a second carrier to ship the respective parcel via a second delivery service, and to calculate a third respective shipping rate for the first carrier to ship the respective parcel via a third delivery service; and

programming at least one server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices to display the first respective shipping rate, the second respective shipping rate, and the third respective shipping rate to a respective display device in communication with a respective

client computer device used by the respective user to input the respective request.

10.   (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 9, said method further comprising:

        programming at least a third server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices to receive via the first server computer device a respective tracking input from each respective user of a second subset of the plurality of respective users via a respective client computer device, wherein each said respective tracking input comprises a respective identifier of a respective parcel that has been shipped by the respective user using a respective carrier of the plurality of carriers; and

        programming at least a fourth server computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices to obtain respective carrier tracking information from a respective carrier system regarding a respective shipping status corresponding to the respective identifier and to display the respective carrier tracking information to the respective display device in communication with a respective client computer device used by the respective user.

Claims 11 - 30   (Cancelled).

31.   (Previously Presented) A centralized computer system for managing shipping of a plurality of respective parcels by a plurality of respective users using any carrier of a plurality of carriers, said centralized computer system comprising:

        at least a first server computer device that is adapted for concurrent remote access by a plurality of respective client computer devices via a communications network, wherein the first server computer device is adapted for communicating an access of the first server computer device by one or more users of the plurality of users to at least one other functionally aligned server

computer device of the plurality of functionally aligned server computer devices; and

at least a second server computer device that is programmed to receive a respective shipping input via the first server computer from each respective user of the plurality of respective users via a respective client computer device, wherein each said respective shipping input comprises: a first respective item of information characterizing a respective parcel to be shipped by the respective user, a first respective location from which the respective parcel is to be shipped by the respective user, and a second respective location to which the respective parcel is to be shipped by the respective user, wherein the second server computer device is further programmed to use each respective shipping input from each respective user to calculate at least a first respective shipping rate for a first carrier to ship the respective parcel via a first delivery service, to calculate at least a second respective shipping rate for the first carrier to ship the respective parcel via a second delivery service, and to calculate at least a third respective shipping rate for a second carrier to ship the respective parcel via a third delivery service, and wherein the second server computer device is further programmed to display at least the first respective shipping rate, at least the second respective shipping rate, and at least the third respective shipping rate to a respective display device in communication with the respective client computer device used by the respective user to input the respective shipping input.

Claims 32-40.   (Cancelled).

41.   (Withdrawn) A centralized computer system for managing shipping of a plurality of respective parcels by a plurality of respective users using any carrier of a plurality of carriers, said centralized computer system comprising at least a first server computer device that is programmed to:

receive an online tracking request for a respective particular parcel from a respective remote client computer device, wherein the online tracking request comprises a tracking number that corresponds to the respective particular parcel;

identify a respective carrier of a plurality of carriers, wherein the respective carrier corresponds to the tracking number;

poll, via a global communications network, a respective ncarrier shipping status system for the respective carrier for a shipping status of the respective particular parcel; and

respond to the online tracking request with a display to a display device in communication with the respective remote client computer device, of the shipping status of the respective particular parcel.

42.   (Withdrawn) A centralized computer system for managing shipping of a plurality of respective parcels by a plurality of respective users using any carrier of a plurality of carriers, said centralized computer system comprising at least a first server computer device that is programmed to:

respond to each respective request by each respective user of a plurality of users to ship a respective parcel via a respective remote client computer device, by applying a set of carrier-specific shipping location rules for each respective carrier of a plurality of carriers to a respective default shipping location associated with the respective user and to a respective set of parcel specifications input by the respective user, wherein each respective user accesses the shipping management computer system over a global communications network using a respective user client computer device, and wherein each respective user client computer device is adapted for communication with the global communications network;

further respond to each respective request by determining each respective carrier that would support shipping the respective parcel from the respective default shipping location associated with the respective user; and

yet further respond to each respective request by generating a simultaneous online comparison display to a display device in communication with the respective remote client computer device, wherein said simultaneous online comparison display comprises an indication of each respective carrier of

the plurality of carriers that would support shipping the respective parcel from the respective default shipping location associated with the respective user.

43.   (Withdrawn) A centralized computer system for managing shipping of a plurality of respective parcels by a plurality of respective users using any carrier of a plurality of carriers, said centralized computer system comprising at least a first server computer device that is programmed to:

receive each respective request, from each respective user of each respective remote user client computer device of a plurality of respective remote user client computer devices, for shipping information for a proposed shipment of a respective parcel, wherein each respective request comprises an input by the respective user via a respective remote user client computer device of a respective origin identifier, a respective delivery destination identifier, and a respective set of parcel specifications;

respond to each respective request by calculating a service-specific, carrier-specific shipping rate for each respective delivery service of a plurality of delivery services offered by each respective carrier of a plurality of carriers that would support shipping the respective parcel, wherein said service-specific, carrier-specific shipping rate is calculated according to at least the respective origin identifier, the respective delivery destination identifier, the respective set of parcel specifications, and a respective set of rules for the respective delivery service and the respective carrier; and

further respond to each respective request by displaying to a respective display device in communication with the respective remote user client computer device, a simultaneous online comparison comprising at least each service-specific, carrier-specific shipping rate calculated for the respective request.